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Selected Speeches and News Releases

June 14 - June 21, 1990

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ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET PRICE FOR UPLAND COTTON

Washington, June 14—Under Secretary of Agriculture Richard T. Crowder today announced the prevailing world market price, adjusted to U.S. quality and location (adjusted world price), for Strict Low Middling (SLM) 1-1/16 inch (micronaire 3.5-4.9) upland cotton (base quality) and the coarse count adjustment in effect from 12:01 a.m. Friday, June 15, through midnight Thursday, June 21.

Since the adjusted world price (AWP) is above the 1988 and 1989 crop base quality loan rates of 51.80 and 50.00 cents per pound, respectively, the loan repayment rates for the 1988 and 1989 crops of upland cotton during this period are equal to the respective loan rates for the specific quality and location.

The AWP will continue to be used to determine the value of upland cotton that is obtained in exchange for commodity certificates. Because the AWP in effect is above the established loan rate, loan deficiency payments are not available for 1989-crop upland cotton sold during this period.

The six-week transition period from using current shipment prices to using forward shipment prices in the Northern Europe price component of the AWP calculation is complete. However, because both current shipment prices and forward shipment prices for "coarse count" cotton C.I.F. northern Europe are not yet available, the Northern Europe coarse count price this week will equal the 5-day average of the 3 lowest-priced current shipment prices for "coarse count" cotton C.I.F. northern Europe for the preceding Friday through Thursday. The six-week transition period for the Northern Europe coarse count price component of the AWP will begin whenever both the Northern Europe coarse count current price and the Northern Europe coarse count forward price become available.

In calculating the adjustment to average U.S. spot market location, Thursday's current shipment prices for U.S. Memphis territory and the California/Arizona territory as quoted for Middling 1-3/32 inch cotton C.I.F. northern Europe were used.

Based on data for the week ending June 14, the AWP for upland cotton and the coarse count adjustment are determined as follows:

Adjusted World Price	
Northern Europe Price	80.76
Adjustments:	
· Average U.S. spot market location	13.38
SLM 1-1/16 inch cotton	2.20
Average U.S. location	0.39
Sum of Adjustments	<u>-15.97</u>
ADJUSTED WORLD PRICE	64.79 cents/lb.
Coarse Count Adjustment	
Northern Europe Price	80.76
Northern Europe Coarse Count Price	<u>-82.77</u>
	2.01
Adjustment to SLM 1-inch cotton	<u>-4.75</u>
	-6.76
COARSE COUNT ADJUSTMENT	0 cents/lb.

The next AWP and coarse count adjustment announcement will be made on Thursday, June 21.

Charles Cunningham (202) 447-7954

#

FIFTY-FOUR INDICTED IN TEXAS FOR FOOD STAMP FRAUD AND DRUG VIOLATIONS

WASHINGTON, June 14—U.S. Department of Agriculture special agents, police officers from Temple and Killeen and sheriff's deputies from Bell County, all in Texas, today began serving arrest warrants on 54 people charged with food stamp trafficking and drug-related violations, according to USDA's Deputy Inspector General Leon Snead.

A federal grand jury in Waco returned sealed indictments two days ago charging 35 defendants with exchanging food stamps for cash or narcotics, or distribution of controlled substances. The remaining 19 defendants were indicted by a state grand jury on drug-related charges.

Snead said the indictments were part of "Operation Cooperation" which focused on identifying individuals and businesses who were illegally accepting food stamps in exchange for cash or narcotics. During the six-month investigation, undercover USDA agents and police officers exchanged \$8,000 in food stamps for cash and quantities of narcotics. The maximum penalty for unauthorized possession and acquisition of food stamps is five years in prison and a fine not to exceed \$250,000.

Arrested today were Richard Bouldin, 38, David Dotsey, 30, Mike Flores, 46, Cecelia Mae Henry, 33, Ronald Hogue, 28, Herbert Holleman, 60, Mack Jackson, 26, Charles Anthony Lott, 28, Robert Riley, 26, Isaac Sanchez, 37, and Porfirio Santibenez, 65, all from Temple. Also arrested were Vera Wasnuk, 34, and Timus Marshall, both from Kileen.

Several arrest warrants remain to be served.

"Operation Cooperation" was a joint investigation by the Temple and Killeen Police Departments, the Central Texas Narcotics Task force, the Bell County Sheriff's Office and USDA's Office of Inspector General. "This operation clearly demonstrates the value of cooperation between the federal government and local authorities," said Snead.

The cases are being prosecuted by U.S. Attorney Ronald F. Ederer in Waco, and Bell County District Attorney Cappy Eads.

David Dickson (202) 447-6701

#

USDA GIVES PERMIT FOR GENETICALLY ENGINEERED CORN TRIALS IN IOWA

WASHINGTON, June 15—The U.S. Department of Agriculture has granted a permit to BioTechnica Agriculture, Inc., Overland Park, Kan., to conduct field trials of genetically engineered corn in Iowa. It is the first field test of genetically engineered corn in the United States and the first such permit given to Biotechnica.

The corn being tested differs from standard corn only in that it contains genetic marker genes. These genes allow researchers to map more exactly the location of genes on the chromosomes that code for botanical and agronomic characters such as plant height, yield, disease resistance or protein make-up of the grain. Once the gene location is identified,

researchers can manipulate them and eventually introduce them into new corn varieties and other crops as well.

“After reviewing this experiment, we are convinced that researchers have designed it carefully and in accordance with our permit procedures,” said James W. Glosser, administrator for USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. “They have built in precautions that prevent the spread of plants or pollen from the designated test site.”

The tests will begin in June in Lisbon, Iowa, and continue throughout the summer.

Corn is the most important field crop economically in Iowa and in the United States, Glosser said. It ranks among the top three field crops worldwide. The tests may give researchers a tool to understand better the basic biology of the crop.

BioTechnica scientists already have examined the experimental corn plants in the greenhouse and wish to repeat the studies under field conditions. They will monitor the plants to see if the genetic manipulations affect agronomic characters such as fertility, plant height, grain weight and maturity.

Copies of the environmental assessment and the finding of no significant impact may be obtained by writing to Clayton Givens, USDA, APHIS, BBEP, Room 843A, Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md., 20782.

Amichai Heppner (301) 436-5222

#

USDA AMENDS LIST OF CERTIFIED HORSE PROTECTION PROGRAMS

WASHINGTON, June 15—The U.S. Department of Agriculture announced today several changes in its recently published list of horse industry organizations that are certified to carry out designated qualified person (DQP) training under the Horse Protection Act.

To be licensed as a DQP, a person must have experience in the horse business on the level expected from stewards, judges and other show officials and have completed the training provided by USDA-certified organizations. By profession, DQP’s may be veterinarians, farriers, horse trainers and the like. A DQP serves as the representative of a show or

sale manager who is responsible for keeping sore horses from being shown or sold.

This list advises the general public and the horse industry of the certified horse protection representatives, or DQP's, participating under the Horse Protection Act. The act explicitly forbids the showing or sale of horses that are sore or have been sored intentionally by the use of cruel methods, devices or irritants on a horse's legs to accentuate its gait. DQP's are charged with examining horses to ensure enforcement of this act.

The California State Horsemen's Association located at 897 Third Street, Santa Rosa, Calif. 95402, has been certified to establish and operate a DQP program. Also, two major groups, the Walking Horse Owner's Association of America, based in Murfreesboro, Tenn., and the National Horse Show Regulatory Committee in Shelbyville, Tenn., merged into one certified DQP program known as the National Horse Show Commission. Their new address is P.O. Box 167, Shelbyville, Tenn. 37160. All DQP's licensed under either former program remain licensed under the new program.

Questa Glenn (301) 436-7799.

#

U.S. DONATES CORN TO HONDURAS

WASHINGTON, June 15—The United States has donated 25,000 metric tons of U.S. corn to Honduras, according to F. Paul Dickerson, general sales manager of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Foreign Agricultural Service.

The \$2.2-million donation will be sold by the Honduran government to its private sector to help meet food and industrial needs arising from corn production shortfalls. The proceeds will be used to provide food assistance to the needy, assist farmers in projects to increase production and improve rural infrastructure and distribution. The supply period is fiscal year 1990.

The donation was made under Section 416(b) of the Agricultural Act of 1949, which authorizes the donation of surplus commodities owned by USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) to needy people overseas. The program is carried out by the U.S. Agency for International Development, acting as the agent of CCC.

This is the first amendment to the March 9 Section 416(b) agreement with Honduras and increases the total value of the agreement from \$1.2 million to \$3.4 million.

For more information, contact James F. Keefer, Foreign Agricultural Service, (202) 382-9263.

Sally Klusaritz (202) 447-3448

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PRIVATE EXPORTERS REPORT SALES ACTIVITY FOR TAIWAN

WASHINGTON, June 15—Private exporters today reported to the U.S. Department of Agriculture export sales of 108,000 metric tons of corn for delivery to Taiwan during the 1989-90 marketing year.

The marketing year for corn begins Sept. 1.

USDA issues both daily and weekly export sales reports to the public. Exporters are required to report to USDA export sales of 100,000 metric tons or more of one commodity, made in one day, to one destination by 3:00 PM eastern time on the next business day following the sale. Export sales of less than these quantities must be reported to USDA on a weekly basis.

Thomas B. McDonald (202) 447-3273

#

USDA PROTECTS NINE NEW PLANT VARIETIES

WASHINGTON, June 15—The U.S. Department of Agriculture has issued certificates of protection to developers of nine new varieties of seed-reproduced plants, including alfalfa, garden bean, hard fescue, ryegrass, triticale and wheat.

Kenneth H. Evans, of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, said developers of the new varieties will have the exclusive right to reproduce, sell, import, and export their products in the United States for 18 years. Certificates of protection are granted after a review of the breeders' records and claims that each new variety is novel, uniform and stable.

The following varieties have been issued certificates of protection:

- the 5364 and 5683 varieties of alfalfa, developed by Pioneer Hi-Bred International Inc., Johnston, Iowa;
- the Blue Knight variety of garden bean, developed by the Ferry-Morse Seed Co., Modesto, Calif.;
- the SR 3000 variety of hard fescue, developed by Seed Research of Oregon Inc., Corvallis, Ore.;
- the Accolade variety of perennial ryegrass, developed by The O. M. Scott & Sons Co., Marysville, Ohio;
- the Stan-I, Eve, and Victoria varieties of triticale, developed by Pioneer Hi-Bred International Inc., Johnston, Iowa;
- the Karl variety of wheat, developed by the Kansas Agricultural Experiment Station, Manhattan, Kans.

The certificate of protection for the Karl wheat variety is being issued to be sold by variety name only as a class of certified seed, and to conform to the number of generations specified by the owner.

The plant variety protection program is administered by AMS and provides marketing protection to developers of new and distinctive seed-reproduced plants ranging from farm crops to flowers.

Carolyn Coutts (202) 447-8998

#

USDA ANNOUNCES MEETING OF SCRAPIE NEGOTIATED RULEMAKING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

WASHINGTON, June 18—The U.S. Department of Agriculture will hold the second meeting of the scrapie negotiated rulemaking advisory committee July 9-10 in Washington, D.C. to develop a revised program for the control of scrapie.

The meeting is open to the public and will be held in the offices of the Conservation Foundation, 1250 24th Street N.W., 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on both days. An official notice of the meeting will be published in the June 19 Federal Register.

Scrapie is a fatal disease of sheep and goats that attacks the central nervous system. Currently, there is no test or treatment for scrapie.

The meeting will bring together technical specialists, representatives from USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and the sheep industry, and others interested in scrapie issues. The committee will

discuss, among other topics, an outline of a proposed flock certification program.

The negotiated rulemaking process uses an independent facilitator, follows guidelines established by the committee, negotiates in good faith and aims at reaching a consensus on which all involved parties can agree.

Public participation in the meeting will be allowed during announced periods. Anyone wishing to file a written statement with the committee may do so either before, at, or after the meeting by sending the statement to Helene Wright, Chief, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, USDA, Room 866, Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md., 20782. Comments must be received on or before July 20, and should refer to the scrapie negotiated rulemaking advisory committee.

Janna Evans (301) 436-7251

#

USDA PREPARES DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR ANIMAL DAMAGE CONTROL

WASHINGTON, June 18—The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced completion of a draft environmental impact statement (EIS) on the Animal Damage Control program, as well as the dates for meetings to involve the public in the development of a final EIS. The program is responsible for controlling wildlife damage to agricultural and natural resources, and protecting public health and safety.

“The draft EIS now available for review is the result of over two years of analysis on the effects of the ADC program on U.S. wildlife,” said James W. Glosser, administrator of USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. “We encourage the public and state and federal agencies to comment on the draft to ensure that all concerns and possible solutions are voiced.”

The draft EIS examines 11 alternatives for the ADC program. Of these, the no-action alternative, the compensation alternative, and the current-program alternative are reviewed in greater detail because they each represent distinct approaches to wildlife damage control and, thus, have different effects on the environment.

According to Glosser, the draft EIS identifies the current-program

alternative—which uses integrated pest management to reduce wildlife damage—as the preferred alternative.

“The draft EIS carefully studied the impacts of each alternative on the biological, economic, cultural and physical environment,” Glosser said.

The federal government’s involvement in wildlife damage control began in the late 1800’s. In 1985, Congress transferred the ADC program from the Interior Department’s Fish and Wildlife Service to APHIS. In assuming management of this program, APHIS adopted, in 1986, the environmental impact statement that had been prepared by the Fish and Wildlife Service in 1979. Federal law requires that APHIS periodically review and evaluate each of its EIS’s. The draft for ADC was prepared in accordance with that regulation.

The public meetings will be held from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on (1) Aug. 6, at the Sierra Mariposa Room, Holiday Inn-North East, 5321 Date Avenue, Sacramento, Calif.; (2) Aug. 8, at Ashley Hall, Holiday Inn-Airport, 11832 Plaza Circle, Kansas City, Mo.; and (3) Aug. 10, at USDA, Jefferson Auditorium, South Building, 14th Street and Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C.

Persons wishing to speak at the meetings should register from 9:30 a.m. to 10 a.m. on the day of the meeting. Unregistered persons may speak after registered persons have been heard. Speaking time is limited, so speakers are encouraged to submit written comments and summarize these comments when they speak.

Notice of availability of the draft EIS will be published in today’s Federal Register.

Comments on the draft EIS will be accepted if they are received on or before August 31. An original and three copies of written comments referring to docket no. 90-099 should be sent to Director, Operational Support Staff, ADC, APHIS, USDA, Room 820, Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md., 20782.

Comments may be inspected at USDA, Room 1141-S., 14th Street and Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C., between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays.

Pat El-Hinnawy (301) 436-7799

#

PROTEIN QUARTET MAY HOLD KEY TO SOYBEAN OIL QUALITY

WASHINGTON, June 18—Soybean oil used in margarines, cooking oils and salad dressings eventually could be more plentiful and have higher quality or longer shelf life because of new research under way on four crucial proteins in the bean, a U.S. Department of Agriculture plant physiologist said.

Eliot M. Herman of USDA's Agricultural Research Service said scientists have known about the existence of the proteins for about 30 years. Imbedded in the membrane of oil droplets inside the bean, the proteins are responsible for shaping the oil into droplets.

Working at the ARS Plant Molecular Biology Laboratory Beltsville, Md., Herman has used monoclonal antibodies to clone the genes responsible for production of these proteins.

"What we've done in our research is take things that were known, but not really analyzed, and advanced them a step further," he said.

"We have the proteins, we know where they are on the droplets, and we know how they're made," he said. "We now can determine whether the protein levels parallel oil formation as the seed develops. At about the middle of seed development, you start to see the droplets form.

"Next, we're interested in finding out how the genes that code for proteins involved in production and packaging of the oil inside the bean are turned on and off. We can use the clones to find out how that activity is affected by drought, heat stress or other factors. We need to understand the gene structure and regulation of activity of the genes."

Herman said researchers may someday be able to manipulate the proteins to add other ingredients to the droplet membrane, perhaps altering the oil inside.

"We might alter the gene for the protein to produce an enzyme that changes the composition of the oil," he said. "The oil in beans now grown has a composition that causes it to become rancid easily, and it has to be hydrogenated so it won't turn rancid so quickly. Maybe we could change that."

Herman said soybeans are the biggest oil crop in the United States, with an oil content of 20 percent in mature beans. Soybean oil is widely used in foods such as margarines and salad dressings.

The United States annually exports about 1.5 billion pounds of soybean oil. Improvements in the oil's shelf life or quality could help expand overseas sales.

Sandy Miller Hays (301) 344-4089

#

FOREST SERVICE AND SOVIET UNION JOIN TOGETHER TO RESEARCH CLIMATE CHANGE

WASHINGTON, June 18—Scientists from the United States and the Soviet Union will spend the summer camping in the backcountry of Siberia while on a research expedition to collect data on climate change as part of a cooperative agreement between the two countries.

The project, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service and the U.S.S.R. State Forest Committee, will assess the possible effects of climate change on forests in both countries and will develop recommendations for management responses. The project is organized by the Institute for Resource Management (IRM), a non-profit environmental problem-solving organization founded by Robert Redford. Field research will be coordinated by the University of California at Santa Barbara under the direction of Dr. Daniel B. Botkin and the All-Union Scientific Research Center of the State Forest Committee, directed by Anatoly Z. Shvidenko.

"The Department of Agriculture is proud to be a part of an international research effort that will help our country be a leader in preparing for any possible negative effects from climate change," said Patricia Kearney, acting assistant secretary for Natural Resources and Environment. "This is a unique opportunity to work cooperatively with the Soviet Union, improve our knowledge base and move towards better management of the world's resources."

This joint effort is an extension of work that began in 1988 between the IRM and the Soviet Academy of Sciences. IRM President, Terrell Minger said, "Climate change is a global problem that transcends all political and institutional boundaries. Managing the world's resources in the face of this challenge will require unprecedented levels of cooperation between all sectors and nations. This project will combine government, private, and academic resources from the U.S. and U.S.S.R. and apply them to the study of climate change."

Both Kearney and Minger are attending the Moscow Climate Change Workshop June 18-22, to coordinate climate change measurement procedures and plans. Following the workshop, seven scientists from the U.S. and seven from the U.S.S.R. will spend two months collecting biomass data on trees and soil of the boreal forest. The teams will then travel to the United States to collect similar information.

The Soviet research sites are in Yakutsk, in eastern Siberia, and the Komi Region in Western Russia. Caribou Creek, Alaska, approximately 40 miles north of Fairbanks, and the Boundary Waters Canoe Area on the Superior National Forest in Minnesota, are the U.S. research sites.

The next step in the project will involve analyzing and interpreting the data using a forest growth simulation model developed by Botkin. The results will be released and policy recommendations will be discussed at a U.S. conference, in 1991.

The goal of this cooperative effort is to provide new information about what effect climate change may have on the forests, how to respond to these changes, and to promote international action and cooperation on the issue.

Diane Hitchings (202) 475-3778

Parry Burnap, IRM (303) 832-6855

#

CALIFORNIA FIRM FINED FOR VIOLATING POULTRY INSPECTION LAWS

WASHINGTON, June 18—A federal court has fined Fleming Foods West, Inc., of Oakland, Calif., \$10,000 for violating the Poultry Products Inspection Act, according to a U.S. Department of Agriculture official. The fine must be paid by July 15.

Dr. Lester M. Crawford, administrator of USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service, said the food distributor was convicted on May 25 in the U.S. District Court of Northern California on one misdemeanor count for holding for sale poultry products gnawed by rodents and adulterated with rodent feces. The firm entered a guilty plea.

FSIS compliance officers discovered adulterated products in the facility during a regular review. In addition, the firm's records contained several reports, including one from the Food and Drug Administration, which

indicated the rodent problem and product contamination had been reported to plant management. After the firm ignored repeated warnings, FSIS recommended that criminal proceedings be instituted against the firm, which resulted in the court action.

FSIS ensures that meat and poultry products sold in commerce are safe, wholesome and accurately labeled.

Jim Greene (202) 382-0314

#

NUN WINS GRAND PRIZE IN NATIONAL FOREST SCENIC BYWAYS SWEEPSTAKES

WASHINGTON, June 19—An Alabama nun has a new car to use in her community work, thanks to the National Forest Scenic Byways Sweepstakes, a nationwide promotion to make people aware of outdoor recreation opportunities in the national forests.

Sister Julie Guillot of Fairhope, Ala., received the prize from George Leonard, associate chief of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service. She was the grand prize winner in the sweepstakes conducted by the Forest Education Foundation of Anaheim, Calif., in cooperation with the Forest Service and the Plymouth Division of Chrysler Corporation.

Sister Julie, who described herself as "numb" when she first heard the news, will use the car for a variety of community service needs in Fairhope, where she is activities director for a retirement home. She is a member of the Sisterhood of St. Joseph of Carondelet, an order based in St. Louis, Mo.

"We hope she will also use her new car to visit the national forests," said Leonard. Over the past two years the Forest Service has designated 71 Scenic Byways along 3,761 miles of road in 31 states, including the Talladega Scenic Drive in Sister Julie's home state of Alabama.

The byways are specially designated routes along some of the most scenic stretches of road through the national forests. "These roads offer spectacular scenery, special pullouts and signs along the roads," according to Leonard. The Scenic Byways offer visitors the opportunity to learn more about America's cultural, historical, geological and biological heritage.

“When they first called, I thought I’d won a bicycle,” Sister Julie said. A second call confirmed she had won the grand prize: a 1990 Plymouth Acclaim LX.

The sweepstakes was one result of a partnership between the Forest Service and Plymouth. Other initiatives have included interpretive signing along the byways, advertising in major magazines and a traveling Scenic Byways exhibit used at county fairs and consumer travel shows.

Marty Longan (202) 475-3777

#

USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET RICE PRICES

WASHINGTON, June 19—Acting Under Secretary of Agriculture John B. Campbell today announced the prevailing world market prices of milled rice, loan rate basis, as follows:

- long grain whole kernels, 8.45 cents per pound;
- medium grain whole kernels, 7.58 cents per pound;
- short grain whole kernels, 7.52 cents per pound;
- broken kernels, 4.22 cents per pound.

Based upon these prevailing world market prices for milled rice, rough rice world prices are estimated to be:

- long grain, \$5.31 per hundredweight;
- medium grain, \$4.88 per hundredweight;
- short grain, \$4.86 per hundredweight.

The prices announced are effective today at 3 p.m. EDT. The next scheduled price announcement will be made June 26 at 3 p.m. EDT, although prices may be announced sooner if warranted.

Gene Rosera (202) 447-7923

#

PRIVATE EXPORTERS REPORT SALES ACTIVITY FOR CHINA

WASHINGTON, June 19—Private exporters today reported to the U.S. Department of Agriculture export sales of 100,000 metric tons of soft red winter wheat, for delivery to China during the 1990-91 marketing year.

The marketing year for wheat began June 1.

USDA issues both daily and weekly export sales reports to the public. Exporters are required to report to USDA export sales of 100,000 metric tons or more of one commodity, made in one day, to one destination by 3:00 PM eastern time on the next business day following the sale. Export sales of less than these quantities must be reported to USDA on a weekly basis.

Thomas B. McDonald (202) 447-3273

#

DNA PROBE COULD ANSWER ELM DISEASE QUESTIONS

WASHINGTON, June 20—A new scientific tool fashioned from a fragment of genetic material can pinpoint the presence of the pathogen that causes elm yellows, a tree disease that wreaks havoc in American elms and blocks sales of their seedlings in European markets.

Ing-Ming Lee, a plant pathologist with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, developed the “probe” to detect the mycoplasma-like organism, or MLO, responsible for elm yellows. The probe is based on a fragment of DNA from the organism. Lee works in the Microbiology and Plant Pathology Laboratory operated by USDA’s Agricultural Research Service at Beltsville, Md.

Lee is not the first person to develop DNA probes, but his is the first one for the pathogen behind elm yellows, which is destroying American elms as has the Dutch elm disease.

Unfortunately for property owners, a tree infected by elm yellows may show no signs of a problem until it is beyond saving. But Lee’s probe would offer a chance of detecting the presence of the telltale MLO before that point.

The probe also could reveal whether seedlings are infected before they are ever planted. This could open the door to greater exports of American seedlings to Europe, according to Lee.

A similar plant disease associated with MLO's is found in European elms, but researchers are unsure whether it is the same MLO causing elm yellows in America. Currently, the importation of living elm into European and Mediterranean countries from North America is prohibited.

Robert E. Davis, research leader at the Microbiology and Plant Pathology Laboratory, said Lee's probe also could provide important information on MLOs in general.

"We know there are more than 300 plant diseases worldwide associated with MLOs," he said. "But we don't know how many MLOs there are. Lee's elm yellows probe and other MLO disease probes developed in our laboratory can help show if the same or a related MLO is at the root of different plant diseases, as well as what insects may be spreading various MLOs."

Sandy Miller Hays (301) 344-4089

#

USDA TO HOLD REFERENDUM ON ESTABLISHING CAROLINA FEDERAL MILK MARKETING ORDER

WASHINGTON, June 20—The U.S. Department of Agriculture has decided to establish a federal milk marketing order for North Carolina and South Carolina, if the affected milk producers vote to support the order.

"The decision is based on a review of a hearing held at the request of ten cooperative associations representing approximately 90 percent of the milk producers associated with the Carolina market, and on a review of comments received by USDA since it recommended the order in March," said Daniel D. Haley, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service.

The hearing was held April 17-25, 1989, in Charlotte, N.C., and reopened Aug. 22, 1989, in Alexandria, Va.

The referendum will be completed by July 15, Haley said. Those producing milk sold in the affected area during March 1990, are eligible to vote. For the marketing order to be effective, the referendum would have to be favored by at least two-thirds of those voting or by those producing at least two-thirds of the milk produced by all of those voting.

The primary milk consumption areas in the two states include Charlotte, Greensboro, Winston-Salem, Raleigh, Durham, Asheville, and Fayetteville in North Carolina, and Columbia, Charleston, and Greenville in South Carolina.

Haley said the order is necessary to ensure an adequate supply of milk for consumers in both states and to set minimum prices milk handlers (bottlers) must pay dairy farmers for milk. North Carolina regulates its milk production under a state order, and South Carolina has no milk marketing regulations. A federal order will match supply and demand for the entire area, with special circumstances spelled out to deal with uses of milk in oversupply, and to encourage delivery of milk to bottling plants in undersupply, as in other federal milk marketing orders.

The new order would install principles common to other orders, Haley said. Its major provisions would:

- adopt a three-class system of payments for milk, according to how it is used, with milk sold for drinking (Class I) getting the highest price, milk sold for soft milk products (Class II) getting a lower price, and that sold for hard milk products like butter, hard cheese and dried milk (Class III) the lowest price;

- establish pooling standards for plants, stipulating how much milk must be shipped to or received by the plants for them and the farmers supply-ing them to qualify for the benefits of regulation under the order;

- set minimum prices regulated handlers must pay for milk used in each class;

- compute uniform prices regulated handlers must pay dairy farmers under market-wide pooling, the process whereby farmers' receipts reflect an averaging of prices paid for all uses of milk in the entire marketing order area; and

- establish a "base-excess" plan whereby production in months of average or short supply would be used in setting a monthly base, and whereby prices in the other months of heavier production for milk in excess of the base could vary downwards. This plan would encourage farmers to level out their production throughout the year, thus minimizing disposal problems caused by seasonal oversupply.

The order also would establish payment procedures to be followed by regulated handlers; and, as in all federal orders, it would cover the cost of administering the order with a monthly assessment of milk handlers. In this case, handlers would be assessed not more than four cents per hundredweight of the milk they purchase under the order.

The new order would adjust milk prices for butterfat content, as in most federal milk orders. It would not use a multiple component basis (considering both butterfat and nonfat solids) to set Class II and Class III prices.

Authority for federal marketing orders is in the Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937. Federal milk marketing orders do not set retail prices consumers pay for milk, Haley said. The orders affect consumers by assuring a balance between supply and demand for milk, however, he said.

Notice of the decision to establish the order and details of the referendum will be published in the June 22 Federal Register. Copies may be obtained from the Dairy Division, Order Formulation Branch, USDA, AMS, Rm. 2968-S, P.O. Box 96456, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456; telephone (202) 447-6273.

All eligible producers of record will receive ballots shortly after June 22. Eligible producers in North Carolina and South Carolina not receiving ballots should contact their local county extension offices. Other eligible producers not receiving ballots should contact the division at the above address.

Clarence Steinberg (202) 447-6179

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EGG PRODUCERS TO VOTE ON AMENDMENT TO EGG ORDER

WASHINGTON, June 20—The U. S. Department of Agriculture will conduct a national referendum among egg producers July 16 through Aug. 10 on an amendment to the Egg Research and Promotion Order that would permanently eliminate its refunds of assessments.

Daniel D. Haley, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, said Congressional amendments to the Egg Research and Consumer Information Act in 1988 suspended the refunds for an 18-month period beginning Jan. 1, 1989, pending results of the national referendum.

All commercial egg producers owning over 30,000 laying hens during the period Jan. 1 through March 31, 1990, except those chiefly producing hatching eggs, are eligible to vote in the referendum, Haley said.

AMS will mail ballots by July 16 to all producers of record. For the amendment to be adopted, at least two-thirds of the voting producers, or a majority of producers representing at least two-thirds of the volume of eggs produced by all voters, must approve.

If the amendment is adopted, egg producers will continue to pay mandatory, nonrefundable assessments of 5 cents per 30-dozen case of commercial eggs to the American Egg Board for research, promotion and consumer education programs. Exemption from assessment would continue for producers with flocks of 30,000 or fewer hens, and for all Alaskan and Hawaiian egg producers.

Details of the referendum will be published in the June 22 Federal Register. Copies and further information may be obtained from Janice L. Lockard, Chief, Standardization Branch, Poultry Division, AMS, USDA, Room 3944-S, P.O. Box 96456, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456, telephone (202) 447-3506. Eligible voters not receiving ballots by July 16 may obtain them from that office.

Clarence Steinberg (202) 447-6179

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**THIS WEEK’S HONEY-LOAN REPAYMENT LEVELS
UNCHANGED**

WASHINGTON, June 21—Producers may repay their 1989 honey price-support loans at the following levels, according to Keith D. Bjerke, executive vice president of the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Commodity Credit Corporation:

Weekly Honey-loan Repayment Levels, color and class, cents per pound, 1989 crop Table

White	40.0
Extra-light Amber	37.0
Light Amber	36.0
Amber	35.0
Nontable	33.0

The weekly repayment level for 1990-crop honey is 38.0 cents per pound for all colors, table and nontable grades.

Levels are unchanged from those announced last week.

Producers who redeem their honey pledged as loan collateral by repaying their honey-price support loans at these levels may not repledge the same honey as collateral for another loan.

Jane K. Phillips (202) 447-7601 8:00 am-4:30 pm EST

John C. Ryan (202) 447-8207 4:30 pm-5:30 pm EST

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Background

U.S. Department of Agriculture • Office of Public Affairs

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE AFRICANIZED HONEYBEE

To help educate the public about the Africanized honeybee (AHB), the U.S. Department of Agriculture has prepared this list of questions and answers on the AHB.

1. **Question:** Are Africanized honeybees the same frightening killer bees I've read about and seen on the news and in movies?

Answer: Yes and no. The two names refer to the same bee, but the correct name is Africanized honeybee. The AHB is the hybrid offspring of African honeybees brought to Brazil in 1956 and honeybees commonly found in this hemisphere. Because of the way Africanized honeybees have been portrayed in the media, some people believe these bees swoop down from the sky, en masse, causing death and destruction. This is not true. In reality, the chances of being injured by an Africanized or any honeybee are far less than the chances of being hit by lightning.

2. **Question:** When will the AHB reach the United States?

Answer: Some may have arrived in southern Texas even as you read this. But it took more than 30 years for them to migrate from Brazil to the United States.

3. **Question:** How far north will they spread?

Answer: Nobody knows for sure, but some scientists believe they will survive only in the southern United States where the winters are relatively mild. Others believe Africanized honeybees will survive wherever other honeybees are kept. We will continue to study them after they arrive.

4. **Question:** How fast do they spread?

Answer: It's difficult to say for sure, but it is thought that Africanized honeybees move from 100 to 300 miles a year, depending on the weather and terrain.

5. **Question:** Is one sting from an Africanized honeybee deadly?

Answer: One sting from an Africanized honeybee is no more painful or dangerous than a sting from any other honeybee, but Africanized honeybees tend to sting with less provocation and in greater numbers than other honey-bees. It is important to remember that one sting from any bee can be harmful, even fatal, if the person stung is allergic to bee venom, so people allergic to bee venom should always carry a first-aid sting kit with them. The best way to keep from being stung is to stay away from place where the bees live, including managed and wild colonies.

6. **Question:** What makes Africanized honeybees and other bees sting?

Answer: Honeybees sting when their nest is threatened by invaders. Africanized honeybees are different from our local honey bees in that they tend to defend their hives more quickly and in greater numbers. Generally, Africanized honeybees pursue intruders further than other honeybees do.

7. **Question:** How many stings will Africanized honeybees inflict if their nest is threatened?

Answer: Like all honeybees, Africanized honeybees sting only once because they die shortly after stinging. However, as a group, Africanized honeybees tend to inflict more stings than domestic honeybees because they react in greater numbers. One study shows that, in similar situations, Africanized honeybees have stinging responses ten times greater than that of domestic honeybees. Whatever the number of stings, AHB's can be very serious pests and must be treated with caution.

8. **Question:** What does an Africanized honeybee look like?

Answer: To the naked eye, an Africanized honeybee looks just like any other honeybee. The only way to distinguish between Africanized and other honeybees is by microscopic examination. Honeybees are brown or black and covered with hair.

9. **Question:** How fast does an Africanized honeybee fly?

Answer: About the same as any honeybee, about 12-15 miles an hour.

10. **Question:** How far will an AHB chase an intruder?

Answer: Some have been known to fly as far as a quarter-mile, but they usually stop if they can't detect an intruder or if there is no longer a threat to their colony.

11. **Question:** How can I stay away from an AHB swarm and avoid getting stung?

Answer: People unfamiliar with beekeeping should always stay away from all bees and swarms, regardless of the kind of bee. If you see a swarm or hive of bees, regardless of the kind of bees inside, it is best just to walk away.

12. **Question:** Will a swarm chase me?

Answer: Because swarms are not established colonies with hives to defend, most swarms will not chase you. Most bees, including the AHB, are not particularly defensive if they don't have a home to defend.

13. **Question:** How do I avoid disturbing an AHB nest?

Answer: Be cautious of Africanized honeybees the same way you are about poisonous snakes, scorpions, or wasp nests. In the case of AHB, this means you never climb a large tree, kick a felled tree or tree stump, roll a log, or turn over a large rock before checking to see if foraging honeybees are coming and going from the area. When walking or hiking in the country, keep an escape route in mind because it is possible to outrun stinging bees.

14. **Question:** What should I do if I accidentally disturb a colony?

Answer: You should run and find cover—a blanket, car or house—as soon as possible. Running zig-zag or through tall bushes is helpful because it makes it harder for bees to follow. Never stand still, crawl into a hole or get yourself in a position that is difficult to leave. Bees tend to sting around the head and face. Stings received around the nose, eyes, ears, mouth and neck can be very disorienting and cause you to stumble. So, as you run, try to throw whatever protection you have (a shirt or jacket) over your head, *WITHOUT BLOCKING YOUR VISION*. Don't worry if there are a few bees under your cover; a few bee stings are not a threat unless you are allergic. Do not slap bees because that kind of movement attracts and incites

them. Keep running until you are clear of bees, then seek first aid immediately if you feel ill.

15. **Question:** What should I do if I see someone else attacked?

Answer: If you see an attack, chances are you, too, will be attached. The victim should be running away and so should you. Try to steer a clear path away from the area and tell the victim to follow you. Keep an eye on the victim in case the person falls or gets trapped. If that happens, you must decide whether or not to rescue them. A faulty rescue attempt will only further endanger you and the victim. *DO NOT TRY TO RESCUE A TRAPPED VICTIM WITHOUT SOMETHING TO PROTECT BOTH OF YOU.* Blankets, sheets, and clothes can be used. Protecting victims against more stings could save their life. But if you can't reach the victim, you should wait until the honeybees retreat or return to their nest at dark.

16. **Question:** What should I do after an attack?

Answer: Most importantly, remove any stingers quickly and see a doctor if necessary. Do not try to remove stingers with tweezers or your fingers as this will only squeeze more venom into your body. The best way to remove a stinger is to scrape it off with your fingernail or the edge of a dull knife. Persons allergic to bee venom should see a doctor immediately. If medical care is not available, persons allergic to bee venom should use a first aid kit containing one or two shots of epinephrine (adrenaline). This can prevent some reactions to bee venom. Monitoring your own responses to bee stings is difficult and unreliable, so you should see a doctor who is familiar with reactions to bee stings. If possible, bring the insect that stung you to the doctor's office, because different insect stings require different treatments. Bee stings, if left untreated, can cause serious health problems later.

James Tew (216) 264-3911
June 19, 1990

